

2017

Cranberry Industry Revitalization Task Force Update

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Recommended Citation

Gates Allen, Dawn and DeMoranville, Carolyn J., "Cranberry Industry Revitalization Task Force Update" (2017). *Cranberry Station Extension meetings*. 235.

Retrieved from https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cranberry_extension/235

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Cranberry Industry Revitalization Task Force Update



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AND

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Task Force Sub-Committees

- **Exit Strategies**
 - **Committee Members**
 - Jack Buckley (Fish and Game)
 - Dan Sieger (Asst. Sec. EEA)
 - Rep. Bill Straus
 - Rep. Susan Gifford
 - **Others at meetings**
 - Cass Gilmore (grower)
 - Jeff LaFleur (grower)
 - Brett Meredith (grower)
 - Ian Ward (grower)
 - John LeBeaux (MDAR)
 - Brian Wick (CCCGA)

Task Force Sub-Committees

- **Renovation Committee Members**

- Matt Beaton (grower)
- David Johnston (DEP)
- Parker Mauck (handler)
- Susan Meharg (grower)
- Senator Mike Rodrigues

- **Others at meetings**

- Jason Wentworth (MDAR)
- Jeff LaFleur (grower)
- Jeff Kapell (grower)
- Dawn Gates Allen (grower)
- Brian Wick (CCCGA)

Task Force Sub-Committees

- Technology and Innovation Committee Members

- Catherine DeRonde (MDAR)
- Dawn Gates Allen (grower)
- Carolyn DeMoranville (Cranberry Station)
- Dan Crocker (handler)
- Dan Burgess (DOER)
- Rep. Paul Schmid

- Others at Meetings

- Alex Pollard (DOER)
- Jeff LaFleur (grower)
- Ian Ward (grower)
- Gerry Polano (MDAR)
- Laura Maul (MDAR)
- Brian Wick (CCCGA)

Cranberry Wetland Banking Pilot Program



Exit Strategy

Action needed: Legislative/Executive Agency

Payment by public or private sector for taking bogs out of production for wetland mitigation.

Develop the way a program would work and conduct a pilot to test the concept.

This would fall under the purview of DEP and/or Fish and Game.

New Concept

Public funding needed: NO

Cranberry Water Use Transfer Program



Exit Strategy (primarily)

New Concept

Action needed: Legislative/Executive Agency

Public funding needed: NO

Potential to sell water rights of a retiring bog.

Relates to Water Management Act.

This would fall under the purview of DEP.

Cranberry Bog Restoration Program



Exit Strategy

Action needed: Executive

Existing Program

Public funding needed: Bond Funds

Authorized program in environmental bond bill but **funds not yet released.**

Funds would be used by Fish and Game to buy bogs and restore to natural wetland.

Enhance important habitat and water resources.

Cranberry Land Assessment – 61A

Accomplished



Exit Strategy

New Concept

Action needed: Legislative

Public funding needed: NO

Eliminate roll-back taxes if the bog is permanently restricted to conservation.

MassDevelopment Renovation Loan Guarantee



Accomplished

Renovation or other Capital Improvement

Re-tool Existing Program

Action needed: Executive Agency

Public funding needed:

Loan guarantee – similar to mortgage insurance.

Loan comes from MassDevelopment or local bank.

Mass Development protects amounts that exceed underwriting guidelines.

Can be used for renovation or other on-farm needs that increase the value of the farm, such as equipment, value added business enhancements, etc. Can also be used as a line of credit.

Renovation Tax Credit



Renovation

Action needed: Legislative

New Concept

Public funding needed: Suggest up to \$2 million in credits (no direct cash)

Outright tax return credit for qualifying renovation projects; capped annually per grower.

Renovation Grant Program – Ag Innovation Center



Renovation

Action needed: Legislative

Funds would need to be appropriated.

Similar to previous renovation grant program managed by CCCGA.

Designed to help ‘small farmers’. Likely would require farmer ‘match’.

Last time capped at \$10,000 per acre, \$100,000 per farmer.

Existing Program

Public funding needed: YES - Suggest
up to \$1.5 million

UMass Dartmouth Cranberry Health Research Center



Technology and Innovation

Action needed: Executive

Existing Program

Public funding needed: **\$500K Bond**

Funds authorized in Environmental Bond Bill, **need to be released.**

Matching fund program. UM researchers partner among and outside campuses.

Seed funding for health studies.

\$100K in FY17 budget was cut by the Governor.

UMass Cranberry Station Facility Upgrades

Preliminary work done



Technology and Innovation

Existing Program Upgrade

Action needed: Executive

Public funding needed: **\$5 million Bond**

Funds authorized in Environmental Bond Bill, **need to be released.**

\$100K in FY16 supplemental budget funded feasibility study.
[item placed by Rep. Straus and Sen. Rodrigues]

Design showed this morning.

Farm Viability Enhancement Program (FVEP)

In discussion



Technology and Innovation

Existing Program
Modification

Action needed: Executive Agency

Public funding needed: **YES**

There was a cranberry specific FVEP in the past. Died due to lack of participation.

Revive this MDAR program and now allow renovation and other technology improvements to qualify for funding.

Funds granted in exchange for various length conservation covenant.

Farm Technology Review Commission

In the works

Technology and Innovation

Existing Program Upgrade

Action needed: Legislative/Executive

Public funding needed: NO

Previous committee was authorized in action related to Dairy Task Force.

Need to re-tool the committee authorization to add other types of farmers, incl. cranberry and then appoint members.

'Think tank' to look at regs and statutes that are barriers to farming success; recommend updated technologies.

Alternative Energy Development

In the works

Technology and Innovation

Action needed: Executive Agency

Primarily solar.

Resolve issues about placement near bogs (wetlands) and potential change of use under 61A.

Support small projects designed for on-farm power. [Larger projects leave 61A with developer funding the roll-back].

State is working on SREC3 – CCCGA has submitted comments.

Existing Program

Reauthorization, changes

Public funding needed: NO

Economic Development Coordinator position



Technology and Innovation

New Concept

Action needed: Legislative/Executive Agency Public funding needed: **\$50K**

Funding via MDAR for position at CCCGA (with some CCCGA match).

Educate and guide growers through process of identifying and participating in State and Federal Programs that can help the bottom line.

Example – increase participation in AEEP.

Career Technical Cranberry Education Program



Some progress on curriculum at Bristol Aggie

Technology and Innovation

New Concept

Action needed: Executive Agency/Industry

Public funding needed: **YES**

Train future growers and highly skilled employees (trained workforce).

Aggie high schools and UMass Stockbridge School add curriculum.

Industry/growers provide internship opportunities on farms and in support industries.

Check-off for Research and Promotion



Technology and Innovation

New Concept

Action needed: Industry/Legislative

Public funding needed: NO

Mirror the way WI funds the Wisconsin Cranberry Board. They assess \$0.10 per barrel.

Would need grower vote and legislation. MDAR would administer the mandatory assessment.

A board of growers would accept, evaluate and fund proposals for research and promotional activities.

Work with USDA to enhance Ag Conservation Easement Program



Technology and Innovation

Existing

Action needed: Industry

Public funding needed: **no additional**

Communicate to USDA.

As the current program stands, too restrictive and financially unattractive to growers.

Application process also very slow. Needs to be streamlined and easier to navigate.

Task Force Report



The report with links to supporting presentations can be found at:

MDAR

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/boards-commissions/cranberry-revitalization-task-force.html>

CCCGA (Under “Reports” in the Growers section)

www.cranberries.org